

REMARKS

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-32 are currently pending. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1, 2, 13, and 20 are amended and claims 10-12, 16-19 and 24-32 canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. These amendments are made solely to focus the claims on inventions of current importance, not for reasons of patentability. Applicants reserve the right to reintroduce the unamended or canceled claims in this or another application. Claims 1-9, 13-15 and 20-23 are thus pending following entry of this amendment.

The amended claims are supported throughout the specification, including, for example, at pages 21, first partial paragraph; page 32, last partial paragraph; and pages 33-40.

II. Response to Restriction Requirement

In response to the restriction requirement mailed November 12, 2003, Applicants elect without traverse Group I, which includes claims 1-23.

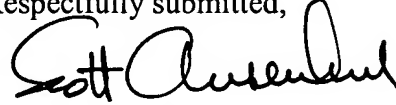
If, as here, Group I claims are elected, the Office is also requiring a species election. Specifically, Applicants are required to elect a single macular degeneration-associated molecule. In response, Applicants elect the species fibulin-6. Claims 1-9 and 14-15 read on this elected species. Because this is a species election, it is Applicants' understanding that the Office will follow the procedure set forth in MPEP §809.02(c), which provides for a complete action on the merits of all claims readable on the elected species, and in MPEP §803.02, whereby upon the finding of allowable species, examination will continue with the non-elected species until all species have been examined or a non-allowable species is found.

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Amdt. dated May 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action of November 12, 2003

PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 303-571-4000.

Respectfully submitted,



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